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A WARNING PIECE TO AFFLICTED ENGLAND:

OR

The Church of God under a ſtate of DESERTION.

Laid out in

VII. MAXIMES

WITH

APPLICATION to the preſent Times

Together With

The Teſtimonies of ſeveral Reverend Divines concerning the danger the Church of God is in.

By JOHN MAUDIT, *Miniſter of the Goſpel at* Penſhurſt *in Kent.*

ZECH. 1. 5, 6. *Your Fathers where are they? and the Prophets do they live for ever? Yet my words and my ſtatutes, which I commanded my ſervants the Prophets, did they not take hold of your Fathers? and they returned and ſaid, Like as the Lord of hoſts thought to do unto us, according to our wayes, and according to our doings, ſo hath he dealt with us.*

London, Printed by *D. Maxwell* for SA. GELLIBRAND, at the BALL in *Pauls* Church-yard. 1659

LIBRARY

TO THE
Godly and Faithful MINISTERS of the GOSPEL in *ENGLAND.*

Grace, Mercy and Peace be multiplyed.

Reverend Fathers,

Humbly commend these few papers to you, as the best judges of the case set forth therein. You know what the state of Desertion *is, whither it fall upon a particular person or upon a Nation; and of all the Sonnes that* Sion *hath brought up, you chiefly have bowels and compassions for her to be sensible of what evill befalls her.*

Jerusalem, Shilo, *the Asian, and Roman Churches are before your eyes continually, as so many pillars of salt with* Lots *wifes Motto on them,* Remember. *Oh be pleased to look home, and see how it is with your own Vineyard that you are set to keep. Take these few short hintes into your bosom, and weigh them in the balance of the Sanctuary, and enlarge them as God gives you a call*

and occaſion. This only I premiſe, what Jacobs *Sons did with their brother* Joſephs *coat, the like do I in this caſe that is before you, they brought their brother* Joſephs *coat torn and new-dyed with bloud, and ſayd to their father,* This have we found; know now whether it be thy Sons coat or no *The like is here before your eyes, you have here robes torn, and ſullied with dirt and blood, now do you know whoſe they are? Is this* Sion *the joy of the whole earth, and is this her ſad condition? If ſo, conſider what is to be don, and ſeek her peace. Which is all that I take the boldneſs hereby to remember you of. Who am*

One of your fellow Laborers
in the Goſpel of peace.

JOHN MAUDIT.

The State of the Visible Church upon Earth under Desertion.

The First Maxime.

That the Church visible may fall sometimes into a State of Desertion.

BY the Church visible is meant either a particular Church, or the collective general Church. That any particular Church may be deserted, and totally exterminated, either by means of persecution, or in progress of time by its own proper defection from the faith, and Orthodox truth of Christ, appears by these Arguments;

First, the Word of God asserts it, *Hos.* 2. 3. *Jer.* 7. 12, 14, 15. *Rev.* 2. 5. and 3. 16.

2. Experience confirms it in the Churches of *Corinth*, *Ephesus*, *Laodicea*, *Jerusalem*, and many other instances, God having long since removed his golden Candlestick from them.

3. There can no special Promise of Priviledge or exemption be shewed to secure any particular Church from this danger.

Again, By the Church visible may be meant the collective or general Church upon earth, which are all the particular Churches consider'd together: And of this the Proposition is also meant in some sort, that it may come to pass that all the external particular visible Churches may as to common apprehension, fall away from the true Worship of God by a general Cataclysme; so as that the whole visible Church

Church of Christ here upon earth may seem to be cast off, and forsaken of God and abolished. Proofs of this :

First, Under the Old Testament the Prophets bewailed such defections and desertions. The Church being reduced to so obscure a State and Condition, as that no outward and visible face of the Church appeared in publike any where ; neither were the Members of the true Church able to discern one another, as in the dayes of *Elias*, 1 *Kin.* 19, 14.

Arg. 2. Under the Gospel we finde, That Christ and his Apostles have foretold, that many should fall from the Faith, yea, that there should be a general Apostasie and falling away, 2 *Thes.* 2. 3. And so strong should the defection be, as that, if it were possible, the Elect themselves should fall away, *Matth.* 24. 24. And when the Son of Man should come he should scarce finde faith on the earth, *Luke* 18. 8. A Caution. Yet notwithstanding it can never be that all the particular societies and Churches should be really extinguished, and utterly corrupted, and laid aside from the true Worship of God ; but that alway God will keep some true worshippers more or less, whose assemblies, though obscure, doth constitute a true Church for the promise of Christ shall preserve the Church from utter and reall extirpation, *Matth.* 16. 18.

The Second Maxime.

The state of Desertion defined.

That the State of Desertion *is, Gods hiding of his face from his people generally, and leaving them to be exercised with great afflictions, and that for a very long season,* Psal. 44. 23, 24, 25.

THe *hiding of Gods face* implies three things: First, The with-holding of his gracious Spirit in Counsel, that should direct us what is best to be done, and in what manner to do it, and a want of his fostering grace that should help

us

us to do all things: in our ſtraits God ſeems incogitant of us, aſleep and taking no great notice of our diſtreſſes, fears, faſts prayers, changes, deſigns that are carried on. As when God refuſed to anſwer *Saul* when he asked counſel: Or to give the Church any tokens of his preſence, any Prophets that could tell them how long the affliction ſhould endure. Pſal. 77. 9.

2. The hiding of Gods face implies, the delivering up of a people to ſtrong deluſions, violent temptations; a giving them up to their own hearts luſts and counſels, that they might eat the fruit of their own doings, *Prov* 1.30,31. and Satans deluſions: As in *Ahabs* caſe, God delivering him up and his Councel to the ſuggeſtion of a lying ſpirit, that he might fall at *Ramoth Gilead* in battel.

3. It implies, great diſpleaſure in Gods heart againſt a people All three Perſons in the bleſſed Trinity declaring againſt them, as a people turned off and divorced, who are no longer in league with him, 2 *Chr.* 15.2. *Deut.* 31.16,17. *Hoſ.* 1.9,8,7,6. The Father counting them a burthen upon his heart until he be eaſed of them, *Iſa.* 1.24. He will hear no interceſſor for them, *Jer.* 15.1. He will caſt them out of his ſight, and not ſuffer them to ſtand any longer before him, *Jer.* 15.1. Yea, he will appoint them to ſeveral fearful judgements, v.2. He will at length ſcatter them abroad into other Kingdomes and places, v.4. and will harden the hearts of men againſt them in their Captivity, that none ſhall pity them, v.5. Chriſt the ſtaff of beauty is broken over their heads, they have no benefit from Jeſus Chriſt and his Interceſſion and blood to keep the peace between God and them any longer; their names are in a manner croſſed out of Chriſts Ephod, He puts off thoſe ſweet names and gracious titles of High Prieſt, King, Elder Brother, Husband, Saviour, Advocate; and puts on terrible names and marches out againſt them upon his Fathers Commiſſion. He calls himſelf a furious teaſed Lion, *Hoſ.* 5.14,15. that will tear and none ſhall dare reſcue them. A Leopard for ſubtilty, *Hoſea* 13.7.

to

to catch them unawares; a Bear bereft of her whelps, *verſ.* 8. that ſhall devour with fury; a piercing Eaſt-winde, *verſ.* 15. that ſhall dry up root and branch; a conſuming fire, *Pſal.* 18.8. A cruel archer, *Lament.* 3. 12, 13. a reſolute terrible enemie, *Ezek.* 21. 3, 4, 5, to 15. Laſtly, the Spirit of God diſ-owns them: 1. He ceaſes to ſtrive with them by inward counſels upon their hearts. 2. He fights againſt them, teſtifying out of Gods Word and by his Miniſters, and every Judgement perpetually againſt them. 3. By witneſſing in heaven againſt them; for as it is the Spirits office to witneſs ſometimes for us, ſo upon this occaſion he bears witneſs againſt us; as he intercedes ſometimes with us, ſo now he cryes and groans againſt us, *Hebr.* 3. 7, 8, 9, 10, 11. this makes God ſwear ſolemnly that he will deſtroy ſuch a people for grieving ſo kinde a Meſſenger.

Thus Deſertion appears to be a hiding of Gods face; three Circumſtances yet remain in the definition to be opened.

Its a hiding of Gods face from a people *generally*: every cloud upon the Sun that ſhadows our place does not make night, but when the Sun is down, and all the Horizon in every point obſcured, then 'tis night: So afflictions or Gods hiding his face from ſome particular ſoul does not make a deſertion of the Church; but when it is general, a damp upon every family, upon all ranks and conditions, Cities, Countries, then 'tis a plain deſertion, as theſe places of Scripture teſtifie, *Iſai.* 9. 19, 20, 21. and 10. *v.* 22, 23. *Iſai.* 1. 5. 6. 4. 7, 8, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25.

Again, it is not the cloſe of Gods favour or hiding of his face in ſome degree that layeth a people in this forlorn eſtate, but Deſertion is a loſs of grace and favour in an *eminent degree*, high diſ-favour, a leaving them to be exerciſed with great afflictions: the abſence of a Nurſe from the Child is not ſtraightway a forſaking of it, or a letting it fall as *Mephiboſheths* Nurſe did him, but a caſting it out of her arms as

Hagar

Hagar did *Iſhmael*, and going away that ſhe might not ſee it die: At the beginning God was but lightly diſpleaſed with *Saul*, but at laſt he finds that God had forſaken him, and delivered him up to an evil ſpirit; at firſt God lightly reproved the people of *Iſrael* by his Prophets, but they taking no notice, God leaves them wholly in their enemies hands, as the Prophet *Zecharie* notes, *Zech.* 1. 4, 5, 6. Or elſe we may count upon it that Deſertion comes on by degrees, as God was noted to go out from before the Cherubims and ſtand upon the threſhold, and from the threſhold of the Sanctuary to a mountain neer the Citie, and at laſt quite away; ſo God deſerts his people not all of a ſudden, but as a gracious father loath to depart, he forſakes by little and little, warning them to repent, but if our heart grows hard, his heart hardens too, till he have at laſt caſt off his people.

The third and laſt Circumſtance is, That it is for a *long ſeaſon.* Deſertion is a hiding of Gods face, not for a ſhort ſpace, as it was upon *Achans* ſin in *Joſhuahs* time, but for many years together, as it was upon *Iſraels* ſin in *Samuels* time, 1 *Sam.* 7.2. *Hoſea* 2.2. to 13. Thus was *Iſrael* left for ſeventy years together in their captivity.

The Third Maxime.

In times of Deſertion *the three Eſſential Marks of a true Church viſible, are exceedingly loſt, blurred, and defaced.*

Symptomes and ſigns of Deſertion.

THe firſt Eſſential Note of a true viſible Church (agreed upon by all men) is the *pure, faithful preaching of the Word of God*; for if *you abide in my word*, ſaith our Saviour, *then are you my diſciples indeed*, John 10.27. therefore the Church is ſaid to be *built upon the foundation of the Prophets*

 and

and Apoſtles, that is upon the Doctrine and truth delivered by the Prophets and Apoſtles, *Eph.* 2.20. and the Church is hereby defined; *Cœtus in quo verbum Dei purè prædicatur eſt vera Eccleſia, quemadmodum è converſo*; now in times of defertion the Scriptures and written Word of God are rejected for a rule, and ſelf inventions and carnal policies take place; the pure cleer truths of the Word wreſted and baffled or put off by Governors and their people, and a falſe word and rule accepted of; the kingdom of God reſiſted that it cannot take place, and falſe errors ſpread boldly and connived at, there being no publike profeſſion and Church-agreement in the Articles of Faith and Religion.

2 Chron. 15. 2, 3, 5, 6. Rev. 2. 14, 15, 16, 20.

The Second Eſſential Note of a true Church that enjoys communion with God is, That *therein the holy Sacraments are purely and faithfully adminiſtred*: For Chriſt hath not onely left a word to be taught his Diſciples, but for their confirmation in a greater meaſure in the truth, hath annext certain viſible rites which are uſed as certain Σφραγῖδες or Seals which are appendent to his Word. For the Writing and Seals put together give us the greater confidence in Chriſt in whom are the Promiſes. When therefore theſe Seals are diſpenſed religiouſly, according to Chriſts holy inſtitution in the Churches, then it argues, they are the true Churches of Chriſt to all the world; but when theſe are laid aſide or vitiated and corrupted wilfully, then will God deſert his people; for this Reaſon it was that God accounted the ſhame of *Egypt*, to be upon his people, until at *Gilgal* they rouled it away by renewing the Sacrament of Circumciſion; there being no mark of God more upon them before, then was upon the *Egyptians*.

Rev. 2. 4, 5. and 3. v. 15, 16, 19, 20, 21.

The Third Note of a true Church of Chriſt is, *That* Eutaxia *or Holy Diſcipline that Chriſt hath inſtituted for the cutting off of ſcandalous offenders and foſtering of the true babes of Chriſt in all grace.* Wherefore where Eccleſiaſtical Diſcipline is rightly diſpenſed according to the Canons of Chriſt

Christ and his Apostles, there is an evident note of a true Church: but where this is laid aside, it notes out a Synagogue of Satan rather then a Church of Christ: in Christs flock his lambs are tractable and willing to be disciplined; but wild Wolvs and Asses are not easily held and tamed. In times therefore of desertion this sweet and holy power of Christ is counted bonds, and broke asunder, and flung off by the rude multitude: the government that was laid upon Christs shoulder, *Isai. 9. 6.* is took off him, and a reed put into his hands, and a crown of thorns on his head; and that holy rule, that should take place in the house of God, Πάντα ἐυσχημόνως καὶ κατὰ τάξιν γινέσθω is counted an abridgement of liberty too intollerable, so that in stead of order confusion takes place generally. Psal. 2. 3, 5, 9. 1 Cor. 14. 40.

The Fourth Maxime.

In times of Desertion: The two great Ordinances of Magistracie and Ministrie fail much in their power, and become at length like a dead corps.

SAd accidents upon the Magistrates at such times: 1. Good Magistrates are soon taken away, and have but a short time, *Judg. 2. 7. to 15. 2 Kings 23. 25, 26, 27, 29.* 2. As God takes away good hopeful Governors so he sets worse in their room, wicked, ignorant, profane men, and oppressors, *Isai. 3. 4, 5, 6, 7, 8.* Idol shepherds that take no care of the flock, *Zech. 11. 15, 16, 17. Ezek. 21. 25, 26, 27.* 3d. Sad Accident: That the wisest designs and fabricks of Governors that are framed for the good of the Common-wealth are eminently opposed and frustrated; so that their labor is in the fire, *Hab. 2. 13.* and like the moulding of potters clay that is soon broke to pieces again, *Isai. 29. 15, 16.* 4. Sad Accident,

The wiſe deſigns of Governors are turned about by the hand of God to burthen, diſtreſs, and undo the people whoſe welfare was conſulted by them, 2 *Chron.* 28. 20, 21. *Jer.* 46. 17. 16. 15. *Job* 18. 7, 8. *Lam.* 4. 17. 5. The Magiſtrates power preſtringed, ſhortned, diſallowed, denied, ſlighted, at leaſt-wiſe in matters of Religion, 2 *Chron.* 30. 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10. *Pſal.* 2. 2, 3. 6. The great and frequent changes from veſſel to veſſel, from one governor to another, from one ſort of government to another; as in *Iſrael*, from *Jeroboams* family to *Baaſha*, and from *Baaſha* to captain *Zimri*, and from *Zimri* to captain *Omri*, and then to captain *Jehu's* family, then to *Shallum*, then to *Menahem*, then to *Pekah*, then to *Hoſhea*, and at laſt to *Salmanaſar* King of *Aſſyria* that carried *Iſrael* captive: In *Judah* alſo it came to paſs in like manner, from *Jehoahaz* the government was transfer'd to *Eliakim*, from *Eliakim* to *Zedekiah*, from *Zedekiah* to *Gedaliah*, *Iſhmael*, *Johanan*, and at length to the *Grecians* and *Romans*.

Upon the other Ordinance of the Miniſtry theſe ſad accidents alſo are viſible in times of deſertion: 1. The viſions of Gods Word are ſuſpended, the Spirit of God much withdrawn, and the Spirit of error and deluſion ſent abroad, *Hoſ.* 3. 4. *Iſai.* 29. 10, 11, 12. 1 *John* 2. 18, 19. 2d. Sad accident, Faithful Paſtors are removed into corners, and greatly perſecuted and forſaken, *Iſai.* 30. 20. *Gal.* 1. 6. 3. Their counſel not hearkned to *Zech.* 1. 4. 1 *Sam.* 10. 8. compared with *Chap.* 13. *v.* 7, 8, to 14. 4. Their Reproofs ill taken, and requited with wranglings, law-ſuits, ill-uſage, *Iſaiah* 29. 21. 5. Their perſons and office wronged, contemned, denied, 2 *Chron.* 36. 15, 16, 17. 6. Their Power in Church-government ſlighted, rejected, 2 *Peter* 2. 10, 13, 14, 15, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22. *Pſal.* 2. 2, 3. *Jude* 4, 8, 10, 11, 12, 16, 18, 19.

The

The Fifth Maxime.

In times of Deſertion; Abominable Corruptions grow in Courts of Juſtice, and great Councels of the Land. And Falſe-Worſhip, Errors and Lukewarmneſs overſpreads the Churches.

FIrſt, abominable corruptions appear in Courts of Juſtice, and great Councils of the Land: Gods Vine yeelded him but wild grapes, *Iſai.* 5. 4. *He looked for judgment but behold oppreſsion, for righteouſneſs but behold a cry*, verſ. 7. Then he decrees to take away the hedge of the Vineyard, and break down the wall thereof, and lay his vine waſte, that it ſhould not be pruned nor digged any more, but choaked with briars and thorns that grew about it and over-top'd it; then he commands the clouds that they rain no rain upon it. Now Juſtice fails either in the Legiſlative power, or the executive power of a Kingdom theſe wayes: Firſt, in the Legiſlative power of the Kingdom, when the power that ſhould extend it ſelf in making of neceſſary Laws for the relief of the oppreſſed, is reſtrained; therefore in all difficult caſes *Moſes* allowed the Judges to come to him, and he through the Counſel of God made additional Laws, as occaſion required, *Deut.* 1. 17. and 17. *v.*8. to 14. *Numb.* 27. 1, &c. otherwiſe juſtice had failed.

Secondly, When unjuſt Laws are continued or corrupt Expoſitions of good Laws go for Preſidents uncontrolled, which ought timely to be reformed leaſt Oppreſſion it ſelf be made a Law.

Thirdly, When fundamental conſtitutions in Courts of Juſtice are ill laid, Officers being either exorbitant or defective, Charges and Fees too great; Juries made in a mixt way of good and bad men, ignorant and unable to judge in difficult caſes; Parties not ſuffered to ſpeak for themſelves whereby

whereby many righteous cauſes have been betraid and overthrown, Places of Juſtice ſet to ſale, and the like.

In the Executive power likewiſe: Firſt, When Judges, Juſtices and Magiſtrates put off the complaints of the oppreſſed for want of gifts, not willing to move for their relief without hire, whereas they are bound to help them readily upon complaint, *Exod.* 23.8. *Deut.* 16.19. *Iſai.* 1.23. Secondly, When Judges and Magiſtrates, Counſellors, Juries, and all conſpire together to overthrow a righteous cauſe for filthie lucre ſake, *Micah* 3.11. *Ezek.* 22.12. *Deut.* 27.25. this hath a ſolemn Curſe upon it, *Iſai.* 5.23. Thirdly, When Juſtice is delayed beyond what is meet, after that the cauſe hath been throughly heard, by ſhifts and tricks of Law, to toil and weary the oppreſſed in ſeeking their right, *Hab.* 1.2,3,4. *Iſai.* 59. 14. Fourthly, When through favour, or affection, or by-reſpects a wrong doer is acquitted, and let go unpuniſhed; *Jer.* 5. 28. 1 *Kings* 40.42. 5. When a wicked perſon is not onely connived at and ſpared, but alſo aſſoiled as guiltleſs, and juſtified in Court, *Prov.* 17.15. and 24.24.

Again, When Falſe-Worſhips, Errors, Lukewarmneſs, over-ſpreads the Churches. 1. Either when Idolatry, Superſtition, and Falſe worſhips are allowed of, or connived at, *Judg.* 2. 10, 12, 13, 14, 15. 2. When there is a great defection from the true Worſhip of God, and drawing off from Gods Ordinances and holy Church-fellowſhip. Princes and Nobles giving no example of obedience and zeal for the worſhip of God in their own perſons and families, nor putting forth their authority for encouraging the ſervice of God. And the people (a few ſcattered ones only excepted) generally revolted from the Goſpel-worſhip, and cold and indifferent about religion *Rev.* 3. 15, 16. both in publike and private. 3. When abominable deſtructive Errors and Hereſies are ſpread abroad and take with men, *Rev.* 2.14, 15, 16, 20, 21, 22, 23.

The

The ſixth Maxime.

In times of Deſertion; generally Grace decays; Sin grows ripe. Judgments are augmented, and at length Deſolation is decreed.

GRace decays. First, in the Principle of life; the Holy Spirit with-holding his counſels, quicknings, ſweet motions and gracious ſtrivings. 2. Grace decays in its vivacity and working, ſo that men are not ſo vigorous for God, and ready to good works and cheerful in duties as they were. 3. Grace decays in the extent, when Love grows cold towards God and our brethren: Faith is ſcarce to be found, men are difficult in receiving Goſpel-truths and Goſpel-commands that are of great importance, the word not made a rule, nor ſavorie in its precious conſolations. No delightful expectation of Chriſts appearing; zeal for God very rare, and low; and little delight in communion with God. 4. Grace decays in its effects. 1. When there is not much comfort in mens ſpirits but doubts, fears, wounds, ſcars, complaints. 2. When Satan takes courage againſt Chriſtians, and comes on with great wrath and violence, as a Conqueror when he ſees his enemies give ground, and caſt away their ſhields comes on with power. 3. Chriſtians are like fooliſh Virgins drowſie and unprepared for Chriſts coming.

Sin grows ripe, *Gen.* 6.5.7.11, 12, 13. 1. Sin grows ripe, when the root is come to its full magnitude; now the root of ſin is the love of ſin; when men allow themſelves in their ſin, and hate him and perſecute him that reproves him in the gate, having a fixed purpoſe to go on their way, whatſoever God and his Spirit and Miniſters ſay againſt it. 2. Sin grows ripe when the branches are many and large; great enormous crimes are the branches of ſin, great pride, and vain glorious pomp and ſtate, greedy coveting of worldly things; oppreſſi-

on

on of the poor, and afflicted, rioting, and high jollitie joyned with an inſenſibleneſs of the ſad judgments of God abroad, and the afflictions of Gods diſtreſſed *Joſeph*; profanation of the Sabbath, contempt of Gods Word, and counſel of his faithful Miniſters; perſecution of the godly, *Iſai* 5. 8, 7, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15. *Levit.* 26. 14, 15, 34, 35, 43. 2 *Chron.* 26. 15, 16, 17, &c. *Luke* 21. 12, 16, 17. *Amos* 6. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, &c. 3. Sin grows ripe, when its peſtilential ſhadow ſpreads large over all ſorts and conditions of men, Court and Country, Prince and Prophets, Cities, Univerſities, Courts of juſtice, and Councels of the Nation, killing by its deadly quality every plant that is ſet under it. 4. Sin grows ripe, when its fruit grows mellow, men being imboldned in ſin and facilitated to it to commit ſin with eaſe, and without check of conſcience, ſteeled againſt the reproofs of God, taking up a reſolution of *Scelera ſceleribus tuenda.* Old monſtrous exploded ſins and errors being revived amongſt men.

Judgments are augmented: God begins his reproof of Nations with eaſier judgements at firſt, and then raiſes them higher and higher, making one take what the other left, God ſometimes riſes by ſeven fold, *Levit.* 26. 16. to 39. *Joel* 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7. *Luke* 21. 8, 9, 10, 11, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26. famines, droughts, deluges, want of free-trading with forreign Nations, ſickneſs, peſtilences, upon men and beaſts, earthquakes, fire, windes, in the civil ſtate great mutations in the government for the worſe not for the better, civil wars, tumults, Anarchy, forreign invaſions. At length Deſolation is decreed: when a people will not bow to God, they muſt needs break at length, *Zeph* 2. 2. &c. *Luke* 21. 20, 24. *Iſai.* 1. 7, 8, 28, 29, 30, 31.

Mat. 24 8. 7. 6. Iſai. 3. 1, 2, 3, 4, 8. Judges 8. 32. 3. Hoſ. 3. 4.

The Church is diſſolved; the Church is the citie wherein God is ſaid to dwell, and when that is diſſolved God is departed, *Hebr.* 12. 22. *Zech.* 2. 5, &c. Or elſe through continual waſtings it is reduced to a ſmall number, *Micah* 7. 1. 2.

The

The ſeventh Maxime.

In times of Deſertion terrible preternatural accidents are ſet forth by the hand of God in the Heavens and Elements, to give men warning and work them over to a holy fear of the Lord and his judgments; dreadful and unuſual Eclipſes, Comets, flaming Swords, Apparitions in the Firmament; intenſion of light, or creation of ſome new Star in the eight Sphere; the Sea, and Earth, and Fire, being a womb of frequent, monſtrous and extraordinary dreadful effects, monſtrous births amongſt mankinde and beaſts, Luke 21. 11, 25, 26. Joel 2. 30, 31.

NOw what more ſad and dreadful condition can people fall into then to be forſaken of God, and yet it is hard for us to be convinced that we are under ſuch a condition, or going apace into it: Firſt, becauſe it comes on gradually; Gods departure is not altogether of a ſuddain, but by little and little, and therefore the more inſenſible; the Lord notes it in his people when he tels them, *that gray hairs are here and there upon them, and yet they could not be perſwaded that they grew old becauſe old age had crept upon them by little and little*; yea, God had ſet fire round about them, and burnt them up, yet they did not feel themſelves hurt.

A ſecond Reaſon is, Men take up with the outward enjoyment of ſome Ordinances in a formality, and are contented with a little Religion, ſo that as long as they have ſomething left of Religion they are well enough contented; the Calves in *Dan* and *Bethel* ſerved *Iſrael's* turn, as well as the true worſhip of God at *Jeruſalem*, and in *Judah*; they cryed, *the Temple of the Lord, the Temple of the Lord*, at the very laſt, thinking they were well enough, becauſe they had a little form and outſide of Religion left.

3. The more God draws off from us, the greater our inſen-

fibleneſs grows; and therefore we cannot diſcern Gods departure for want of a ſenſible heart.

4. Some mens portion is ſtill fat, and they want not for mirth and all fulneſs, and therefore they think all is well; this temptation is apt to hold thoſe that are in great power and places, as it did *Zedekiah* and his Princes, and the Lords of the Philiſtines when they delayed and ſent the Ark about from citie to citie, thinking all that mortality was but a chance, and all that while it reach'd not unto them it was well enough.

5. *Reaſ.* Some men are intangled in their own particular troubles and intereſts, as they cannot be at leaſure to think how it is with the publike and Church of God: Thus a ſtrange ſtupiditie grows upon the hearts of men, and the farther they go off from God, the more miſerable and more inſenſible of their miſery.

The Lord convince us, the Lord who onely can deal with a heart of ſtone, and pull it out of our boſomes, when it paſſes all the art of Men and Angels; the Lord, I ſay, convince us before it be too late, and ſtate this caſe aright: How is it with us! How it is between us and him? Doubtleſs it would be the greateſt point of our wiſdom to inquire into the truth of this our preſent caſe, which though ſadly hinted at now and then by the gracious and faithful Miniſters of this age, yet has not hitherto been ſtated *ex profeſſo* by any; We want not, Oh bleſſed be God, that yet we want not faithful able Prophets and Seers that would give counſel from the Lord, and ſhew us how great our danger is, and what is to be applied as a Remedie, unleſs we mean to let all go for loſt, and paſt recovery. Thus they ſaid in *Jeremies* time, Jer. 2. 25. *There is no hope, there is no remedy, paſt cure*; and in *Samuels* time, though they had wiſe and godly Miniſters of the Sanctuary, and a Prophet, ſo ſingular a Prophet, as that *Samuel* was, by whom God ſpake ſo evidently, yet asked they not after the Lord in his time for 20 yeers together. O ye vigilant Shepherds of Gods people, ye Princes and Miniſters of the Church of God, ſee you to this betimes, for it chiefly concerns you,

you, for verily in times of Deſertion, the heavieſt blowes of Gods diſpleaſure in general judgments are moſt ſure to fall upon you, if you ſit careleſs and mindleſs of the flock in this condition: *Woe to the idle Shepherd that regardeth not the ſtate of the flock, the ſword ſhall be upon his arm, and upon his righe eye, his arm ſhall be clean dryed up: and his right eye ſhall be utterly darkned, ſaith the Lord.* Alas! how many men had not died if they had not been over confident of their life; and how many goodly Kingdomes and Churches had not been over-thrown, if they had not been ſecure when the mighty hand of God was lifted up againſt them, this is our temper we know not our time. *Man knoweth not his time* (ſaith *Solomon*) *but like as the fiſh is caught in an evil net becauſe he knoweth not his time*: ſo is man; he takes not his time to avoid the danger that is gathering about him. Zech. 11. 17.

What is our caſe? is it nothing to us? all this that hath been ſpoken, is it nothing to us? Ah, I wiſh heartily it did not at all concern mine own Country; may that ever be the bleſſed aboad of Gods preſence and never be forſaken; but is it in truth nothing to us? like *Nathans* parable to *David* a doleful ſtory, but nothing to him until the Prophet ſaid, *Thou art the man.* Then give me leave, O beloved *England*, and dear Chriſtian brethren, give me leave in very faithfulneſs and love, and deereſt love, and dolour of my very heart to ſay, that that is the caſe of this afflicted Land and Nation. We have ſurely been under a great meaſure of Deſertion already, and what the end will be, I dread to think; its true, we are not yet wholly given up, but yet I grieve to ſay, we are far gone, and promiſe our ſelves better times then I ſee ground for. Look back upon the years that are paſt; for theſe thirty years together and more, how little of God hath beene in our Civil and Eccleſiaſtical Councels? Yea, what a conſpiracy was there in that Kings Reign, by proſtituting the Word, Sacraments and Sabbaths of God, and abuſing and baniſhing the Godly Miniſters of the Land? What a conſpiracy was

there to drive God out of the Land, and the purity and power of true Religion, and ſet up Superſtition and profaneneſs: and certainly there hath been a great miſs of Gods preſence, even in the great Councels of the Nation in theſe latter times. Sometimes God hath ſtirred up the ſpirit of his faithful Miniſters, who delivered the mind of God to them, as appears by ſeveral Sermons upon record againſt this generation; but their complaints have not been hearkened to, they turned away the ſhoulder even to this day, and have not accepted of the Kingdom of God offered to them: Go ſearch through the Tribes of our *Iſrael*, and ſee how ſmall the number is of thoſe that bear up a profeſſion of Chriſts name, but generally how oppoſite are the people of the Land to the work of Reformation: which indeed is the very great work that Chriſt calls for in theſe dayes if we mean to prevent our ruine that cometh on faſt upon us. This I have noted, as a fatal mark upon a people and generation a little before their deſtruction, that God ſaid of them, *They would none of my Counſel, they deſpiſed all my reproof, they put out the eyes of their very Seers, and ſaid to their Seers, ſee not, and to the Prophets prophecy not*; now how are a people like to have the counſel of God, when they ſay (as that wretched *Ahab*) of their Prophets, *They hate us and will prophecy no good but evil to us*; they cry down the advice of holy Miniſters and Church councels, as needleſs, by whom if by any upon earth, God uſes to ſend his counſel to the nations, then to be ſure the deſtruction of that people is nigh, God is not amongſt them; *They dig deep, ſaith the Lord, to hide their counſels from me, and when they cry I will not hear.*

Again, how have we been delivered up to our own counſels, and toiled in our own devices, and carried about with the fierce tempeſt of ſtrong temptations through manifold mutations back and forth, which wiſe ſtates-men uſe to obſerve as a forerunning cauſe of the overthrow of Republikes, as Phyſicians do alſo of their ſick men, when they cry, carry me from bed to bed for I find no eaſe, then is death nigh: Thus are we toiled till

you,

till our hearts be almoſt broken, and no one knows what to do, or what to adviſe poor *Sion* crying out, is there none of my ſons that I have brought up that is able to help me? Diviſions, cavellings, ſelf-ſeeking have toſſed men about like light chaffe in a whirle-wind. How has the whole bleſſed Trinity groaned over us and ſtirred with great indignation againſt us. The Father caſting off his people, as if they were a burthen upon his heart; reaching as if he would ſpue them out of his mouth into other lands, yea out of the land of the living, throwing thouſands and hundreds of thouſands into the grave. How has the Lord Chriſt watched like a Lion, and like a Leopard, and catched the very choice ones of the flock and rent them in pieces? How has the Spirit ſtriven and reproved this people till he be now almoſt weary? for methinks I ſee that bleſſed and moſt active Spirit ſitting down and ſaying, I will ſtrive no more, if they will be a loſt people let them be loſt, I have done, I have done with them, the work of converſion ſhall ceaſe, let the world now make converts of them and their poſterity.

Again, Note how *generally* hath the wrath of the Lord gone through the land even almoſt to make a full end: what County, what City or Country, what family in theſe three Nations hath not taſted of the bitter cup of Gods diſpleaſure; and that too in *a very terrible manner*, yea and for *a long ſeaſon too*? Wrath hath been climbing higher and higher, even for theſe 30 years, and if the ancient ones might ſpeak, perhaps they would ſet the account higher.

Look upon the three great marks of the Church of Chriſt upon earth, and ſee how they are clouded and darkned: How is the word ſlighted, diſ-ſavour'd, quenched? The holy Sacraments thrown by and fled from, as if the fleſh of Chriſt were not our meat, but our bane, and we could be better without it. The peace and order and Government of the Church broken to ſhivers and caſt off, ſo that unleſs I look into ſome by-corners of the Nation, here and there, I can ſcarce find the ſplinters and relickes of the true notes of the holy Church of Chriſt amongſt

us.

us. O sad word; what are we declining to after all our profes-sions, vowes declarations? what will we fall off from the Church of Christ like withered leaves in winter, will we banish our selves, exclude our selves, flie from the sweet and precious spouse of Christ, and mother that bare us, and paps that gave us suck? Look farther yet upon the Ordinances of Magistracy and Ministry and look with wakeing eyes, and with sighing hearts: are these become as dead corps, a liveless Effigies, little vigour, and honour and power in them? do they lye in thy streets. O Sodom, like the slain witnesses, fitter for the grave then for the Throne, whiles the profane ones make merry with the liberty they have, and insult over them as those, that whiles they had the power of God were bonds and cords to them and tormented them. What sad breakings have our eyes seen upon Parliaments, and Princes, and Councels, as if the Lord did say, in vain do you trust in broken cisterns when you have forsook the cistern of living water. We have had a little hope sometimes, and said, but now we hope God hath provided faithful zealous magistrates for his people, and painful ministers, but how soon hath God turned his hand and took them away again? yea how soon have they turned their hearts and said, we have no power in the things of God, if the Lord be God he will plead for himself? See and acknowledg what checks have been set against many good purposes of repairing the breaches of the Nation, and setling the Government thereof in righteousness, when we are carried back again into *Egypt* almost. Look upon our Courts of Justice and wisest Councels of the Nation, and do not they answer the distressed as that King of Israel, *Alas! if God do not help we cannot help*; is there not a great cry of the oppressed in the land, surely God hears it. What luke-warmness and indifferency upon the Churches? the best complain of decay of vigour for God, of the growth of sin, of the continuance of judgments; as that poor people so are we, *we roare like bears and mourn like doves.* Yea lastly, consider, hath not God wrote dreadful characters in the heavens and earth, enough to make the stoutest spirited *Belshazer* tremble

you,

tremble if he had any ſenſe left, and do not we yet conclude of our danger? What is it that bears up our hopes? What would we object; would we ſay, we hope no ſuch danger? for God has ſet up amongſt us godly magiſtrates and miniſters now adayes? Bleſſed be God for them; but yet this argues not but that there has been a great deſertion upon the land aforetime, and even yet alſo it may continue: God ſet up godly Magiſtrates in the raign of *Joſiah* over Judah, and yet their deſolation and captivity was not prevented. *Obj.* 1.

But there is ſome little work of reformation begun, and therefore we hope God means not to caſt off the Nation. *Obj.* 2.

So it was in *Joſiahs* time likewiſe, and *Zedekiahs* time there was a very glorious work begun by *Joſiah*, and the worſhip of God ſet up with more ſolemnity ten times then now a dayes; Prince and people joyning like one man in that bleſſed work, and yet it prevented not their ruine; whereas the reformation amongſt us is ſo little, and the oppoſition ſo eminent; that I muſt ſay, that even for this, for the very diſcouraging and oppoſing of the kingdome of God amongſt us, we deſerve to be all ruined together. Oh! *tell it not in Gath and publiſh it not in Aſhkelon, leaſt the uncircumcized of the Nations mock at our ſhame, for what Nation has had God ſo nigh them*, offer'd to them in his Goſpel, and invited by ſo many great ſalvations, and anſwer of prayers in our calamity, as this Nation of *England*, and yet we do not own God as he expects, which makes him go on in a courſe of judgments amongſt us ſtill.

But God has done well for his people in theſe ſad times; caſting out their enemies that ſought their ſubverſion and the ſubverſion of the true Worſhip of God, and giving his people liberty in their profeſſion, and exalting them in the room of thoſe that held them in bondage, and therefore we hope theſe are not times of deſertion. *Obj.* 3.

I anſwer two ways to this Objection: Firſt, that it is uſual with God thus to do in times of general deſertion, to minde in a ſpecial manner his poor peoples good; when he leaves other things to the

plunder,

plunder, yet at that time he makes up his jewels, and hides them in
Mal. 3. 5. a safe place: when he ſtrikes at all, yet he knows where his blows fall, and he lays the heavier end of his ſtaff upon his foes, whiles his children crowd under his arm, and leaſt there ſhould be any miſtake, he ſets a mark in their foreheads too, that he may be ſure to make a difference. But yet becauſe they are ſpared, it does not argue that others were not beaten, and becauſe he paſſes by their door poſts, it cannot be ſaid there was no general plague in *Egypt*. This is the very thing that God aims at in general deſertions, to refine his people thereby, and ſo to ſettle their peace; ſee *Iſai.* 5. 13. compared with 17. When God had ſaid, *Therefore my people are gone into captivity becauſe they have no knowledge, and their honourable men are famiſhed, and their multitude dried up with thirſt*; but what, is it ſo with Gods own choice people, doth the Lord make no difference? Note what follows, *Then ſhall the lambs feed after their manner, and the waſte places of the fat ones ſhall ſtrangers eat*: it does not follow therefore, that it is no time of deſertion upon the Land, becauſe God provides well for his people at ſuch time.

Again, take another anſwer, The deſertion may not be yet over, it may fall heavy, though you have been ſpared hitherto, your turn may come next, and the ſooner becauſe of your ingratitude, unfruitfulneſs and ſecurity under judgments; nay if you come in the room of thoſe that God caſt out before you, and ſin even as they, it ſhall be worſe with you then with them, as God threatned his people when he diſ-poſſeſſed the *Amorites* to make room for *Iſrael*. Now ah! doth not your apoſtaſie and lukewarmneſs, yea coldneſs in love and zeal, and drawing back from holy fellowſhip and Goſpel precious Ordinances? yea, doth not oppreſſion, pride, worldlineſs, hardneſs of heart, and looſneſs, and other abominable filthineſs of *Sodom*, witneſs againſt you that profeſs better things? therefore I fear there will come a time wherein thoſe alſo ſhall have their ſhare. *Hear ye that are afar off, what I have done ſaith the Lord, and ye that are near acknowledge my might. The ſinners in Sion are afraid, fearfulneſs hath ſurprized the hypo-*

hypocrites: Who among us ſhall dwell with the devouring fire? Who among us ſhall dwell with everlaſting burnings? He that walketh righteouſly, and ſpeaketh uprightly, he that deſpiſeth the gain of oppreſſions, that ſhaketh his hands from holding of bribes, that ſtoppeth his ear from hearing of blood, and ſhutteth his eyes from ſeeing evill: He ſhall dwell on high, his place of defence ſhall be the munitions of rocks, bread ſhall be given him, his waters ſhall be ſure. Iſai. 33.

But this is your opinion onely; who is there of thoſe famous Lights and godly Miniſters yet among us, that is of this judgment, for in the mouth of two or three witneſſes every truth is eſtabliſhed? But what Witneſſes joyn with you in this: That the State of the Church hath been for many yeers, and yet is a State of Deſertion? *Object.* 4.

Indeed I muſt confeſs I have not met with any that have *ex profeſſo* ſtated this caſe, and therefore I had many waverings in my ſelf in undertaking of it, and to ſay truth, I had never adventured upon it, had not the Lord put the little book into my mouth and made me eat it before I publiſhed it; my belly was made bitter with the diſguſt thereof, for ſo it pleaſed the Lord, firſt to lead me by the irreſiſtible terrible hand of his ſoveraignty againſt much reluctancy of my ſpirit through this ſad and doleful condition that I might have experience of Gods dealing herein, and be more ſenſible of the Churches caſe. Now the light that the Lord had communicated to my heart, I durſt not ſet under a buſhel, for God ſeems to require it of me, and if I ſhould with-hold it, in the conſciouſneſs of mine own infirmity, it would be to my peril. I know it is a ſceptical age wherein we live, and the plaineſt truths of God are cavell'd at, and hard to be received, yet whether men will hear, or whether they will forbear, God uſes to give warning by his faithful Miniſters, with whom his ſecret is, and I beſeech the Lord to give his own people underſtanding, that they may know the thoughts and counſel of his heart therein. And yet I think the Lord has not put me forth ſingly upon this work neither; but whiles I was thus fluctuating amongſt *Anſw.*

many discouragements, it pleased God to bring to my hand providentially the testimonies of several godly precious Ministers of this age (which has indeed abounded with many) collaterally abetting this truth, and strengthning my hands, as *Ezekiel* did *Jeremiah*, preaching the like word.

The First testimony which seems in part to favour this Position is, that of Mr. *Greenhil* upon *Ezekiel*, *cap.* 3. *v.* 12. *p.* 311. put forth in the year of our Lord, 1645. 'The Happiness (saith 'he) of a people is to have the Lord and his glory amongst them, 'and their greatest misery is to have God depart from them; most 'think the happiness of a people to lie in liberty, honour, plenty 'of all things: *David* once subscribed to it, *Psal.* 144. 15. *Happy are the people that are in such a case*, but he quickly crosseth 'out that subscription, and saith, *Yea, happy is that people whose 'God is the Lord:* There's the happiness to have God amongst 'them, he is the glory of a people, *Zach.* 2. 5. He was the glory in 'the midst of *Jerusalem*, there God dwelt, as his worship, laws, 'oracles, miracles testified, and so he made *Jerusalem* glorious 'among all Nations: Where true Religion is, pure worship, and 'Ordinances, and God working for the good of his people, de-'fending them, that is the glory and excellency of a Kingdome; '2 *Chron.* 13. 25. saith *Abijah*, *God is with us for our captain*; 'this was more then all the strength of *Judah* beside, when *Jero-'boam* came against him with 800000 chosen men, *with you are 'the golden Calves*, ver. 8. you have a great number, but God is 'not with you to be your glory and defence, you have the calves, 'which is your shame and nakedness, but God is with us who is 'our glory and defence: and when *Jerusalem* fell to Idolatry, God 'tels them, that *they had changed their glory for that that did 'not profit*, Jer. 2. 11. they had driven away their glory, and here 'was the beginning of their wo; that's the misery of a Kingdom 'to have God depart from it, then publike enterprises prosper not, '2 *Chron.* 22. 24. then counsel fails, 1 *Sam.* 28. 15. protection is gone '*Isa.* 5. 5. then peace, loving kindness and mercies go, *Jer.* 16. 5. 'this is as taking the Sun out of the Firmament, the eyes out of

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'the head, or ſoul out of the body; now a Kingdome and peo-
'ple lie expoſed to all evils and miſchiefs, *Hoſea* 9.12. *Woe to them*
'*when I depart from them*; all miſchiefs preſently ſtep in, croud
'in upon a people left of God; famine, wars, captivity, a perverſe
'ſpirit, and treacherouſneſs one to another came upon this peo-
'ple when God left his place; and ſo after Chriſts death, when
'God left them, and that voice was heard in the Temple,
'*Migremus hinc*, which *Tacitus* in his Annals alſo mentions, *Au-*
'*dita major humana vox excedere* Deos, *ſimul ingens motus exce-*
'*dentium*; after this dreadful miſery befell them, war, famine, diſ-
'perſion was their portion; they are without God, Chriſt and
'mercy to this day, an undon and moſt unhappy people. We
'had almoſt driven God away by our ſins, ſpecially by our Ido-
'latry and ſuperſtition, but God and his glory are not quite gone,
'*Jer.* 14. 9. *Yet thou O Lord art in the midſt of us, and we are*
'*called by thy name, leave us not.* Thus far Mr. *Greenhill* he con-
feſſes at that time God ſeemed about to depart, God and his
glory are not quite gone, and this indeed is true yet, and may it
ever be a truth amongſt us; God is not quite gone, but if he be
upon going and go farther and farther, what ſhall we ſay at laſt.
Let us hear the complaints of Gods Miniſters ſince that time, which
was thirteen years agoe, and ſee if they complain not ſtill in like
ſort.

The next year after this God ſets the ſame note upon Mr. The 2d
Lockiers heart, *An. Dom* 1646. upon *Coloſ.* 1. See both his *Epi-* Witneſs.
ſtle; and upon *v.* 20. he ſaith thus: 'Sinners view theſe times, they
'are very bloody, God is out with us certainly, how much doth
'it trouble you? are you not the ſame men you were? in the ſame
'wayes? can a man live in his ſins and be at peace with God?
'can a man be at peace with his luſts and with his God? ſecurity
'ſlayes us, nothing will break our hearts; therefore God breaks
'our names, our ſtates, our bones; we flatter our ſelves but riſe
'not to our duty: men thus in with themſelves are certainly out
'with God; tis *England's* heavy plague. God looks not as man
'looks; when you feaſt, he mourns. Victories ſpeak not God recon-

 'ciled:

'ciled: what victories do you see truth make upon mens lusts?
'are not men as dead-hearted, as stout-hearted, as rotten-hearted
'as ever? The Works of God must be acknowledged but not
'abused; you must have other things then this or that external
'victory to make a true *medium* to demonstrate God reconciled
'to you; when justice kills bodies on our side, it may kill as many
'souls on the other side: wrath works without and within. Lord
'how many are hardned and fatned by the blood of others? evil
'*men understand not judgment, but they that seek the Lord under-*
'*stand all things.* Prov. 28. 5. A man had need pray over one act
'of Providence a thousand times ere he venture to interpret it
'once; tis the highest wisdome in the world, to understand the
'works of God; the words of God are ambiguous, the works of
'God are more ambiguous, yet compared they will illustrate one
'another; but few do this at all, not one of a thousand an artist
'this way; and hence tis that Persons and Kingdomes cry peace,
'peace when there is no peace; we take up words and works by
'rote, and ruine our selves and others; if all the Kings side were
'slain, yet were we never the neerer peace with God if we continue
'to resist his will; he hath many wayes to avenge the quarrel of
'his Covenant, and to make all sides know their own. National
'peace and personal peace have one foundation, a through imbra-
'cing of Christ, as you see Persons or Kingdomes pursue or faulter
'herein, so fear or hope. *He is our peace which hath made two one, &*
'*broken down the wall of Partition.* Christ is our peace, as we be-
'come one with him, we become one with God and the creature;
'Christ and we two, God and we are two; God and we out, we must
'needs be out with one another, and with all the Creation.

The same Reverend Author goes on farther pag. 185. What condition but is full of mutation? brave States, brave Kingdomes, bleeding to death, and brought almost to nothing. Our sin is ripe, wrath is gone forth; *England* that was the Queen of Nations for all fulness is wasting to nothing: Natives that for a while have left us, and now return to visit us, scarce know their mother land, her face which looked so pleasantly, is now so besmeared

beſmeared with blood; here was the ſeat of my anceſtors, but tis burn'd; there had I brave and ſweet kindred, but now they are ſlain, and thoſe that live wiſh for death, becauſe nothing left to live upon; we had treaſure as the flints of the brook, eſtate to accompliſh any thing, but now we faint in every undertaking for want of ſilver ſinnewes. We had many Callings, as ſo many ſeveral Ornaments and pillars of State, now all is turned into one, all grave-makers one for another, every one with his ſpade by his ſide, to dig into the heart of his brother, to dig out a ſubſiſtence: Light was little, but Love was much; truth could not be found, but if it could, O how ſweet (ſaid we) ſhould it be unto us, dearer then all? truth now ſhineth in our conſciences and we care not for it: Ah Lord! this is the ſaddeſt change of all, the living are dead, the ſouls living are ſlain with an evil time; Gods vowes were upon us, but now thrown off and becauſe the time will not bear them. Outward changes are bad, but inward changes are far worſe: *England* where are thoſe flames of love which blazed ſo glorioufly a few years agoe? brethren in new *England* were precious: O that we had *Ilium in Italium*, New *England* in Old; Brethren in *Holland* were precious, O that we had them again, and the mercies which there they enjoy! and now they are with us, they are trampled upon as the dirt, and all their pains to hold forth Chriſt and truth to us: are not theſe ſad changes? *Englands* out-ſide, in-ſide, all changed; from vertue to ſin, from love to malice, from wrath to blood, and thus lies weltring and no eye pitties her, neither Gods eye nor her own; *is this Naomi?* Twas *Naomies* friends ſpeech to her, her condition was ſo altered that they knew her not: is this pleaſant? O no, ſaith ſhe, *call me not pleaſant, call me* Mara, *bitterneſſe, for the Lord hath dealt bitterly with me*: ſo may I now ſay, is this *England*? pleaſant *England*? O no, call it *Mara*, bitterneſs, for affection is turned into gall and wormwood, ſhe deals very bitterly with God and his people, and the Lord deals very bitterly with her; ſin multiplies and hightens it ſelf as miſery doth; if God be not very merciful, twill make miſery laſt till there be not a man of us left.

Hear

3. Witneſs. Hear another witneſs ſpeak of the danger of the times, Mr. *William Bridg* in a Sermon before the Parliament, *May* the 17. 1648. Upon *Math.*25.6. pag.20. We read of two ſorts of ſigns which goe before the comming of Jeſus Chriſt; ſome that are more remote and tranſient, ſome that are more immediate and juſt at his coming. Thoſe that are more immediate and juſt at his coming, ye read of in the 20. of *Math.*v.29.30. *Immmediately after the tribulatian of thoſe dayes ſhall the Sun be darkned, and the Moon ſhall not give her light, and the ſtars ſhall fall from heaven and the powers of the heavens ſhall be ſhaken, and then ſhall appear the ſign of the ſon of man in heaven, and then ſhall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they ſhall ſee the ſon of man comming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.*

There are yet to come, but thoſe that are more remote, all ſeem to be paſt already, *Before the coming of Chriſt* (ſayes the Apoſtle) *the man of ſin ſhall be revealed*, that is paſt; before the coming of Chriſt there ſhall falſe Prophets ariſe, and ſay I am Chriſt, and another I am Chriſt, this is paſt: before the perſonal coming of Chriſt, there ſhall be wars and rumours of wars, this is paſt.

And before that day, there ſhall be great diviſions even in the matter of Religion; one ſaying, Lo here is Chriſt, and another, Lo there is Chriſt; this is already: and immediately before, and at his coming, men ſhall be ſmiting their fellow ſervants, eating and drinking with the drunken; this is already: the wiſe and fooliſh virgins ſhall be all a ſleep, and was there ever a time when both wiſe and fooliſh were more a ſleep then now? when men ſet themſelves to ſleep they draw their Curtains, put out their lights and will have no more light come in; ſo now. When men are aſleep their ſenſes are bound up that were open before, they ſee not, hear not, taſt not, ſmell not, their ſenſes are lockt up; ſleep is *ligatio ſenſuum.* And was there ever time when mens ſenſes were more bound up that were formerly exerciſed, then now? are there not ſome that would pray, and hear, and read, that will not now? who have now thrown off all duties, Ordinances, aud means? O what ſleeeping is here? was there

ever

ever ſuch ſleeping among profeſſors as now there is? if ever wiſe and fooliſh Virgins were aſleep, they ſeem to be in our dayes.

The ſame Reverend Author witneſſes again, *July* the 15.1649. in his Vindication of Ordinances on *Deuter.*18.15.pag.27.

I do exhort you, by the ſweat of all your Miniſters dead and living, by the love you bear to your own precious ſouls; hold and keep cloſe to Ordinances in theſe declining times; ſee where they are in purity, and power, but keep cloſe to them. I am perſwaded that there is never a one of you but would be a friend to Chriſt, ſayes Chriſt *Then are you my friends if you do whatſoever I command you.* And can my heart tell me, that I am a friend to Chriſt if I caſt off all his appointments, and all his Ordinances; I am perſwaded that there is none of you, but deſire to be the children of God. *Wiſdome is juſtified of her children*, Chriſt is the wiſdome of the Father, and if you be the children of wiſdome, you will juſtifie Chriſt in all his appointments, but if Chriſt the wiſdome of the father ſhall give you ſuch inſtitutions and Ordinances, and you caſt them off and ſay, they are low and fleſhly and the like: Oh how will you juſtifie Chriſt the wiſdom of the Father? wherefore I ſay, you that are profeſſors, hold your hold in theſe declining times, and if you know any of your friends that are departed from the good Ordinances of God, Oh ſtand and mourn and lament over them, and ſay, alas! alas! my friend how is his crown fallen from his head; if you have a neighbour that hath a monſter born in ſtead of a child, you will lament over your neighbour, and ſay, my neighbour inſtead of a ſweet child hath an ugly monſter with the head of a hog and the eares of an Aſſe: Ah my poor neighbour hath a monſter born in her family. Why this *Non-Ordinance* is *Englands* monſter and as people carry monſters up and down to ſhew them, ſo in other Countries they go up and down, and ſay, come and behold the Engliſh Monſter, a thing never ſeen before, that Profeſſors ſhould deny Ordinances: And yet good Lord, how many families in this Kingdom have this Monſter born there! Ah! will you

not,

not pray, weep, and lament over the families of your friends? Christian hold thy hold, in these sad and declining times hold thy hold.

The 4th Witness.

Another Witness is Mr. *Baxter* in his Saints Rest, part 3. c. 5. Sect. 3. *An.* Dom. 1650. who complains thus, Christ hath been pleading with *England* these fourscore yeers and more, by the word of his Gospel, for his Worship, and for his Sabbaths, and yet the Inhabitants are not perswaded; nay he hath been pleading these six years by threatnings, and fire and sword, and yet can prevail but with very few; and though these bloodie arguments have been spread abroad, and brought home to people from Parish to Parish almost as far as the Word hath gone, so that there is scarce a Parish in many Counties where blood hath not been shed, and the bodies of the slain have not been left, yet multitudes in *England* are no more perswaded then they were the first day of their warning; and they have not heard the voice of the rod, which hath cryed up and down their streets, yet O *England*, will you not sanctifie my Sabbaths, nor call upon my Name, nor regard my word, nor turn from your worldlines and wickedness? God hath given them a lash and reproof, a wound, and a warning; he hath as it were stood in their blood with the sword in his hand, and among the heaps of the slain hath he pleaded with the living and said, what say you? will you not worship me, and fear me, and take me for your Lord? and yet they will not: Alas, yet to this day *England* will not! Let me here write it, and leave it upon record, that God may be justified, and *England* may be ashamed, and posterity may know if God do deliver us, how ill we deserved it, or if he destroy us how wilfully we procured it; and if they that pass by shall ask, wherefore hath God done thus to a flourishing and prosperous Land? you may give them the true, though doleful answer, They would not hear, they would not regard, he smote them down, he wounded them, he hewed them as wood, and then beseeched the remainder to consider and return, but they never would do it; they were weary of his ways, they were weary of his wayes, they polluted his Sabbaths,

baths, they caſt his word and worſhip out of their families, they would not be at the pains to learn and obey his will, nay, they abhorred his Miniſters and ſervants, and holy paths, and all this at the laſt breath; when he had ſlain five thouſand at a fight, the reſt did no more reform, then if they had never heard of it: nay, ſuch a ſpirit of ſlumber is fallen upon them, that if God ſhould proceed, and kill them all ſave one man, and ask that one man, wilt thou yet ſeek me with all thy heart? he would rather ſlight it. Lord have mercy upon us! what is gone with mens underſtanding and ſenſes? have they renounced reaſon as well as faith? are they dead naturally as well as ſpiritually? can they not hear and feel, though they cannot beleeve? that ſad judgement is faln upon them mentioned in *Iſai.* 42 24, 25. *Who gave Jacob for a ſpoil, and* Iſrael (England) *to the robbers? did not the* Lord, *he againſt whom we have ſinned? for they would not walk in his ways, neither were they obedient to his Laws; therefore he hath powred upon them the fury of his anger, and the ſtrength of the battel, and it hath ſet them on fire round about, yet they knew it not; it burned them yet they laid it not to heart.* Yea this much more let us leave upon record againſt *England*; they have been ſo far from reforming and taking up the worſhip of God with delight after all this, that multitudes have contrarily abhorred it at the very heart, and fought againſt it as long as they could ſtand; and when they have been wounded and overthrown in one conflict, they have been as forward to the next, as if they had never felt the hand of God at all, and to root out the ſincere worſhippers and worſhip of God is their continued endeavour, and ſtill they that ſucceed them do the like. Lord, how haſt thou deſerved ſo much ill at theſe mens hands! what harm hath praying, and reading, and preaching painfully, and ſanctifying the Sabbath, and fearing to offend done to *England*? have they ſuffered for theſe, or for their enmity to theſe? And for the Diſcipline of Chriſt, though all parts of the world have much oppoſed it, yet where hath it been ſo powerfully reſiſted? the Lord grant that this hardned, willful, mali-

cious Nation fall not under that heavy doom, *Luke* 19. 27. *But those mine enemies who would not that I should reign over them, bring them hither, and slay them before me.*

Witness. Hear another witness for God against the present times, whom I should have named with the first, because his Testimony was given in his Sermon before the Parliament, *August* 13. 1644. I mean Mr. *Herbert Palmer* upon *Psal.*99.8.*v.*32,35,39. Those that some yeers ago made great Conscience of the Sabbath, and of family duties, are now many of them come even to question, *Whether the Sabbath be at all to be observed or no?* and though they deny not that family devotions are duties, yet they themselves do little regard that their families should observe them; some that were by their own confession, so greatly conscientious of secret prayer, as that they could never omit it without an inward check, now do not make any the least shew that they take any time for it day or night. The faithful Ministers are set against, their tithes and dues with-held and denied, with pretence one while that they are Jewish, another while that they are Popish, any thing that they may weary them out, and that they may have no Ministers at all, or only those that are altogether according to their own lusts; formerly even in ill times, a conscionable Minister in some places could do somwhat toward the bringing his people to knowledg, who now wholly cast off the yoke (because there is no government neither Ecclesiastical nor Civil that they think will at all meddle with them, how refractory soever they be) and grow more brutish and barbarous every day then other. And now above all former times, whoredom and adultery do fearfully abound and grow impudent; even incest is to be found in divers places, and no punishment to be found for it. I cannot forbear putting you in minde of that expostulation of the Prophet, *Ezek.*23.24.&c. The people there flattered themselvs with a conceit that God intended to give them peace in possessing the land, from whence their brethren were driven or carried away captives. *Abraham say they was one, and he inherited the land, but we are many, the land is given us for an inheritance*; but God answers them with an appeal to their

their own conſciences, and then with a peremptory threatning of the contrary, *v.* 25. &c. *You eate with the blood; and lift up your eyes toward your Idols, and ſhed blood, and ſhall ye poſſeſſe the land? Ye ſtand upon your Sword, ye work abomination and ye defile every one his neighbours wife; and ſhall ye poſſeſſe the land? Say thou thus unto them, Thus ſaith the Lord God, Surely they that are in the waſt ſhall fall by the Sword*, &c. Have not we too much of ſuch confidence as they expreſs? and yet no leſs cauſe to fear ſuch an anſwer from God as that was. You thus and thus misbehave your ſelves, and ſhall you have peace? ſhal you have ſetling? ſhal you poſſeſs the land? may we not alſo much more admire the patience and longſuffering of God towards us all this while, that a complete vengeance hath not been taken upon our miſdoings, as well as upon *Germanies* and *Irelands* and even upon ſome parts of our Kingdom and Nation? and if we ſadly conſider how God did not ſpare thoſe faithful men the text points at, did not let faithful *Moſes* and *Aaron* the Saints of the Lord, live to ſee the happineſs of his people, inheriting the Land of Promiſe, may we not upon the remembrance of our greater provocations, tremble leaſt none of us ſhould be ſuffered to live to ſee an end of our troubles, and the Church of God peaceably ſetled in an holy Reformation? Sure we have no reaſon to expect it, unleſs we live to ſee and help to procure our own hearts, and lives, and families, and whole party, to be apparantly more faithful.

Hear alſo another Witneſs, and an acute Obſerver of the times, forewarning our danger, Mr. *Jeremiah Burroughs*, in his Heart-Diviſions, upon *Hoſ.* 10.2. c.1. p.203. [The Lord convince us of and hnmble us for the ſinfulneſs of our Diviſions by his Word, that deſolating judgments be not upon us to convince and humble us. St. *Jerome* in his Comment upon theſe words notes, That the Scripture, 2 *Kin.*17. tels us, That *Hoſhea* was the laſt King of *Iſrael*, and in his time *Iſrael* was carried Captive, yet v.2. it is ſaid *He did not evil in the ſight of the Lord, as the Kings of Iſrael that were before him.* Now the Jewes put this queſtion, Why was not *Iſrael* carried captive with their King, when they had the worſt

The 6th Witneſs. *An. dom.* 1646.

King, but rather when things seemed to go something better then before? God yet chuses this time. The answer they give is, Because in former times the people might pretend they could not tell how to help what they did amiss in the matter of Worship. Indeed they worshipped the Calves, but they were forced to it by the tyranny of their Kings; it should be the loss of all they had if they did not. But say they, in the dayes of *Hoshea* there was more liberty given then before: Now those who would might go up to *Jerusalem* to worship; and that they say is the reason of that expression, That *Hoshea* did not evil as other Kings had done; but when they came to have more liberty, they came to wranglings among themselves (which is an usual concomitant of liberty) now their division rose high, some would go up to *Jerusalem* to worship, others would not; those that went up, cryed out of those that went not; those that went not, vilified those that went. Now their hearts are thus divided, now shall they be found guilty; the desolating judgment must now come, this the time for their captivity, , now he gives them up to the enemie; God was exceedingly provoked with their contentions one against another at this time. What? (sayes God) when I was in some way of favor towards them, when I took off (in great part) the yoke of Bondage that was upon them that sore oppression that was before, none of them (a while since) dared go to *Jerusalem* to worship, and now their Governors are more moderate, their oppressing Courts are down, there is more liberty in the Land for my true Worship, and do they fall out, contemn, divide, wrangle one with another? Let them go into Captivity, let the enemy come in upon them, my soul takes no delight in such a crooked and perverse generation as this is. Our Condition seems to parallel with theirs very much, we lately were under sore and cruel bondage, nothing was more dangerous then the worshipping God in his own way; we were under hard task-masters, oppressing, undoing Courts; the Lord hath in a great measure eased us, it is the unthankfulness, the sinful distemper of mens spirits that makes them say, what is done? it is as ill with us, as ever it was; No, we have much ease, such liberties, as were our

forefathers

forefathers raiſed out of their graves to ſee, they would admire Gods goodneſs, and bleſs him with meltings of heart, we ſpend that ſtrength in ſiding, wrangling, contending, quarrelling, urging and oppreſſing one another, that we ſhould ſpend in magnifying, bleſſing and prayſing the name of God for that mercy we enjoy; we are a divided people whoſe hearts are divided, and heads too, and hands too; peace and unity ſeems to be flown from us, and a ſpirit of contention and diviſion is come upon us; Kings and ſubjects are divided, Parliament is divided, Aſſembly is divided, Armies are divided, Church is divided, and State is divided, City is divided, Country is divided, Towns are divided, Families divided, Godly people are divided, Miniſters almoſt every where are divided; yea, and what heart almoſt is there at this time, but is divided in it ſelf? the thoughts, the counſels, contrivances, endeavours, wayes of men, almoſt of all men, how are they divided? O bleſſed Saviour, are theſe the times thou ſpeakeſt of, wherein five ſhould be in one houſe divided, three againſt two and two againſt three; the Father againſt the Son, and the Son againſt the Father; the Mother againſt the Daughter, and the Daughter againſt the Mother? Oh woe unto us! we find it ſo amongſt us, and yet there is found no healing; we are broken and there is no binding up; it is with us as it was with *Ezek.* 2. 6. *Briars and thornes are with us, and we dwell amongſt ſcorpions*. O Lord, what is this thy curſe at this time upon *England*? briars and thornes ſhall it bring forth; we are rending and tearing, and devouring one another, while the adverſary ſtands before us ready to devour. *Ephraim* is againſt *Manaſſeh*, and *Manaſſeh* againſt *Ephraim*. A fire is come out from *Abimelech* and devours the men of *Shechem*, and fire comes from the men of *Shechem* and devours *Abimelech*; yea there is a fire kindled in our own bowels, it riſes from our ſelves. *Ezek.* 19. 14. *Fire is gone out of a rod of her branches, which hath devoured her fruit, ſo that ſhe hath no ſtrong rod to be a Scepter to rule; this is a lamentation, and ſhall be for a lamentation*: this is amongſt us at this day, and how long it ſhall continue, God only knows. What this people were in

their

their divided condition, that we are; and what does this threaten but that we ſhould be as they a while after this were? namely, a people given up to the rage and fury of the enemy, which the Lord forbid.

The laſt witneſs I ſhall produce, is Mr. *Stronge* in his Sermon before the Lord Major and Aldermen of London, *Nov.*5.1653. upon *Revel.*18.4. pag.20,&c.

Conſider the inſtruments that are abroad in the world; we read of frogs ſent out of the mouth of the Beaſt, *Rev.* 16.13. that is by his ſpecial command and commiſſion, and theſe go forth unto the Kings of the earth in all ſhapes; and we have to fear (nay apparent ground to believe) that beſides the men of corrupt minds riſen up among our ſelves, there are many of thoſe ſent in among us; it were well if we could look upon our Cities, Army, Navy, yea Councels to be free; and ſo much the rather it is to be feared becauſe we ſee all ancient Hereſies revived. *Arrians, Macedonians, Montaniſts, Patriparſians*, yea, that conceit of *Joachim Abbas*, that there is a Goſpel of the Spirit, another Goſpel then that preached by Chriſt; and to obſerve by what mean perſons theſe Doctrines are vented, and yet all the ancient arguments uſed to maintain them; a conſidering man obſerving this, can hardly imagine, but that there be ſome that do ſecretly, and with the beſt advantage inſtill ſuch into them, and that in an unobſerved way; for they are ſaid to be ſpirits, that is, though they act very powerfully, yet inviſibly; their motions, wayes and practiſes are not known. Conſider that conſtant preſſing of liberty of conſcience, which if granted, muſt be univerſal, for who hath power to lay a reſtraint upon one mans conſcience more then another? and therefore the patrons of this opinion do plead for a toleration of Popery, upon a religious account. As alſo that Doctrine of *Mariana* the *Jeſuite*, now ſo generally inſiſted upon, and pleaded for *Princeps nil ſtatuat de Religione*, the magiſtrate is not to meddle with matters of Religion.

Theſe two principles received, lay all open to Popery or Atheiſme; for if popery, as a religion, receive but a toleration, and the

the ſame countenance that otheres do (it being a religion moſt agreeable to nature, as corrupt, and ſo exactly fitted to it) it will ſoon have the moſt followers; for when Popery firſt appeared in the world, the whole world wondered after it, as it had done after Arianiſme a little before. Look upon the Apoſtaſie of the preſent age, men falling from all things in religion, and with an impudent face denying, deriding all; the Scriptures, the Trinity, the Godhead of Chriſt, his ſufferings and ſatisfaction, juſtification by imputed righteouſneſs, the Law of God as the rule of obedience, and whatſoever Doctrines Chriſtian Religion is built upon: Now we know that a great Apoſtacy did make way for popery, 2 *Theſ.* 2, 3. God giving them up to believe a lye, and by this means the man of ſin ὁ ἄνομος the lawleſs one was revealed. And there is great cauſe to fear, that the preſent Apoſtacy amongſt us may have ſuch a tendency; for we ſee men fall from one thing to another until they hold to nothing in matters of Religion; Such an Apoſtacy (as I think I may without breach of charity ſay) that there hath not been the like in any Chriſtian Church ſince the great Apoſtaſie before named: and being thus become, as it were an outward Court, may we not fear that God ſhould give us over to be trodden down of the *Antichriſtian* Gentiles again? and not receiving the truth in the love thereof he ſhould give us up to believe *that lye*.

See more, *Ibid.* for I am weary of holding the pen of thoſe learned Scribes and writing after them, and my heart akes, and my ſpirit ſinks within me to conſider how many dreadful cleer warnings God has given by his ſpirit in the Prophets of theſe times, foretelling our ruine that is ſo nigh, and yet their words are laid aſide, as if they had never been ſpoken, or paſs as the winde which no one takes notice of. But to draw up my argument in ſhort from the teſtimonies of thoſe worthy Prophets. Say now you that have heard the witneſſes of God ſpeak over again to you what they formerly delivered, What think you? doth not all that they have ſpoken amount to a confirmation of this truth in hand: That the preſent ſtate of the Church is a ſtate

of

of deſertion in a great meaſure? though they ſay it not expreſly yet do they not equivalently intimate it; do they not ſay that very condition in reality is befaln us that we call a true Deſertion.

If any one will be contentious farther I appeal to as many of thoſe faithful Witneſſes as are yet alive, and to all the faithful godly Miniſters of theſe Nations, to ſay, whether all this horrible apoſtacy from God, his Ordinances and truth, which is confeſt; thoſe vile and abhorred ſins that are got looſe amongſt us, thoſe ſad and diſmal temptations that make men weary of themſelves; whether all theſe mutations, overturnings, tempeſts, ſhipwracks, wherewith the Princes, Nobles, Miniſters and People of this land have been broken before our eyes, whiles we live to obſerve them and tell poſterity what ſad Monuments of Gods diſpleaſure lie along by our ſhore; whether all theſe ſad calamities (I ſay) that have befallen us, do not witneſs a reall and plain deſertion.

The Lord convince us and our poor poſterity after us of the preſent general judgment, that we or they may be humbled under his mighty hand, and cry mightily to God to ſtop it timely, before it make an utter end; for this is Gods method from which he varies not, that when he is in a way of deſertion, he ceaſes not to inflict one judgment after another, until he hath utterly conſumed that impenitent people that contend with him.

I thought to have ſtruck off here, affecting brevity in this work that ſo it might be ſoon read over, but one objection farther requires anſwer, and it is this.

Grant there has been a great meaſure of Deſertion upon the times, yet is it not now well over, is not the war at an end, and our ſwords beaten into plowſhears, the adverſary overcome and great reſt given us on every ſide?

Bleſſed be God for this, who has remembred mercy in the midſt of judgment, and does not contend for ever; but this I take to be but a parly, a ſhort breathing; did not God draw off *Nebuchadnezzers* army from *Jeruſalem*, and diverted him upon *Egypt*, and then afterwards ſet him on again, and cauſed him to lead away *Zedekiah* and all his Princes, and the

the people of the land captive, and when they thought after this that the wrath of the Lord was at an end; do we not hear of *Ishmaels* massacre and carrying of *Johanan* and the remnant into *Egypt*. It is not then for us to be secure because God hath made a little stop; and I will give you my reasons for it, joyning testimony with a faithful Minister of God whom we have named before, Reverend Mr. *Bridg*.

First, Because the hand of the Lord seemes to be stretched out still in a way of displeasure. What year hitherto produces not the sad effects and tokens of wrath, a breach upon Parliaments, a breach upon Princes, a breach upon the whole Church of God, and the holy Ministers of God, a breach upon man and beasts, a breach upon the fruits of the earth and trading of the Land. Surely we may conclude as the Prophet, *That for all this his wrath is not turned away, but his hand is stretched out still.*

2. Reason, God is not reconciled to us, because we are not yet reconciled one to another. Our love is a reflection of Gods love; his love is the cause of our love, and our love the sign of his love; so on the contrary: Therefore when the Lord had said of those evil times by the Prophet (*Mic.* 7. v.5. *Trust ye not in any friend, put ye not confidence in a guide, keep the doors of thy mouth from her that lieth in thy bosom, for the Son dishonoreth the Father, the Daughter riseth up against her Mother, the* Daughter *in law against her Mother in law; a mans enemies are they of his own house.* What followes? Sure enough this is a sign of Gods anger upon the Nation; and therefore *v.* 9. it is added, *I will bear the indignation of the Lord, because I have sinned against him.* Alas! sayes the Church, God is out with us; we will humble our selves before the Lord, and bear the indignation of the Lord in all this, for the cause of all this evil is our sin.

3. Reason, How can we think but that God is still angry with us because the former sins that God hath been punishing all this while, and which are the very causes of desolation do still abide amongst us.

Defection from the worship of God, declining from our first zeal and love, tollerating of wicked and erroneous persons in Church-fellowship, lukewarmness in religion. *Jer.* 15.6. (*Mic.* 6.2,3,8. *Mal.* 3.7. *Judg.* 8 33,34. *Rev.* c.2,3 *Judg.* 10 6,7,8,9. Rejection of the Word of the Lord sent by his faithful Ministers and abusing them, *Zech.* 1.4,5,6.& 7.11,12,13. 2 *Chr.* 36.15,16,17.&c, 1 *The.* 2.15,16. *Luk* 21.12.13,16 20. 1 *Sam.* 12.14,15. Evil customes, unrighteousness and oppression in Courts of Justice, *Mal.* 3.5. &c. *Isa.* 5.7,8 & 1.v.10,17,21,23,24. *Jer.* 22 1,ad 19. Remisness in Government, *Judg.* 8.32,33,34. & 4.v.1. & 10.v.5,6 ad 9. Cruel usage and persecuting of the people of God by profane ones, *Lu.* 21.12,13,16,20. *Isa.* 59.15,18. *Mic.* 3.2,3,4. 1 *Sa.* 15.1,2,3,4. &c. *E-*

zek.

zek 25.16. and following Chap. *Hab.* 1.13,15. Sacriledg, pride, rioting, regardleſneſs of Gods judgments, open profaneneſs, notorious villanies, Impenitency & forſaking the Covenant of God, & profanation of his Sabbaths *Mal.* 3.8. ad 12 *ch.* 3.5 &c. *c.* 4.1. *Lev.* 26.2,14,16,43. *Iſ.* 3.9 *c.* 5.11.12,8

4 Reaſ. That makes us conjecture further wrath, is the opinion of godly Divines & learnedſt Cronologers upon the times, expecting the ſlaying of the witneſſes & advancement of popery yet again, to which they conceive the myſtery of iniq uity works apace. Adde to this the inundation of the Emiſſaries of the Church of *Rome* into this land, the acceptation of Arminianiſme and ſpiritual popery amongſt the vulgar, the receſs of many Engliſh Divines and gentlemen unto that Church, and favourable compliance with the grand abettours thereof, and then conſider what the end will be.

Go to then, and let us draw up the concluſion of the whole matter: It is evident that the Church of God hath been for many years, and yet is under a great meaſure of deſertion, which hath crept down along like a gangrene from the Churches of *Germany*, *Bohemia*, and others unto our dayes, and even to theſe Kingdomes, God ſtriking all afar off before he would touch this choice and lovely vine of *England*, which he had high eſteem for. Now what the end of the judgment will be the Lord only knowes, this we may humbly ſay, that as all deſertions uſe to do, ſo this muſt at length fall into one of theſe points.

Either an utter deſolation and general ruine, or elſe through mercy and our repentance, a purifying of the houſe of God, and advancement of the true worſhip of God, and power and Kingdome of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt amongſt us or our poſterity: If this lamentable deſertion ſhould end in a general ruine and deſolation, Oh, what heart does not break to hear it. Surely it ſtands us upon to let fall all private intereſts and ſet our ſelves with perpetual faſting and humiliation to propitiate God, and regain his preſence before he be utterly gone. Or if it be like to end well, as ſometimes terrible deſertions doe, yet ſtill it calls upon us mightily to ſeek God, and put away all that does offend him, that we may make way at length for mercy, that we periſh not.

Ah, who amongſt us pitties not himſelf and his poor poſterity, and the Church of God, and the Nation where his lines are caſt? who lies a ſleep like *Jonah* in the keel of the Ship when this tempeſt threatens us all? Oh, you Ship-maſters, the Governors of the people of God go about and ſee, and if any ſleep, rouze them by your authority; pity your ſelves and us who are in like danger, ſearch what is the matter that withall this earneſt rowing you cannot bring the Ship to land and ſet it in a ſafe harbour; Alas, we are like to periſh, becauſe in our veſſel there is not only One *Jonah* aſleep but Many.

FINIS.

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